bcc: Mr. W. B. Papageorge
Mr. J. F. Stapleton
Mr. R. A. Stohr
FYI: Mr. D. J. Forrestal

February 29, 1972

Mr. Walter Stevens
Editor
Fort Dodge Messenger
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501

Dear Mr. Stevens:

As a native Iowan and former Ames resident, I was pleased to receive your inquiry (via Dan Forrestal) on the PCB article in Audubon magazine.

Elizabeth Layne, author of the article "The ABCs of PCBs" contacted Monsanto for information and to verify certain facts as she was writing. In my opinion, she has done a fairly responsible job of rounding up the currently available information on the PCB issue -- although there are a few errors. For example, we know of no uses of PCB in automobile tires or brake linings. And I don't agree that Monsanto released production and sales figures "under pressure." This was done voluntarily so that scientists, worldwide, could have a better understanding of the problem.

I think the article makes four very important points:

1. Although PCB has been used for 40 years, it has only been very recently that it has been suspected of being an environmental problem -- this as a result of development of sophisticated analytical methods which detect PCB at very low levels.

2. There is no evidence to date which shows that PCB, at the very low levels found in the environment, is any hazard to man.

-more-

STLCOPCB4005478

3. There is concern about the persistence of PCB and possible build-up in the environment.

4. Monsanto has taken positive steps, and done it voluntarily, to reduce environmental exposure by restricting its sales to only closed-system electrical uses. This action alone will not solve the worldwide problem of PCB in the environment as there are other major producers of PCB in other parts of the world.

You may be interested to know that at least one scientist in the country has already noticed a decline of PCB in an environmental area he is studying. Hopefully, this trend will continue. Monsanto is making every effort to encourage proper handling, use and disposal of PCB and has a vigorous research program under way to develop a replacement for the only remaining use -- electrical equipment.

If I can be of further assistance, please give me a call.

Regards,

Edward V. John
Public Relations Director

BW

DSW 018935